

Official Transcript of Proceedings  
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

Title: Prairie Island Nuclear Plant  
Public Meeting: Afternoon Session

Docket Number: (n/a)

Location: Red Wing, Minnesota

Date: Wednesday, July 30, 2008

Work Order No.: NRC-2313

Pages 1-44

**NEAL R. GROSS AND CO., INC.**  
**Court Reporters and Transcribers**  
**1323 Rhode Island Avenue, N.W.**  
**Washington, D.C. 20005**  
**(202) 234-4433**

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

+ + + + +

PUBLIC MEETING TO DISCUSS THE LICENSE RENEWAL

AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCOPING PROCESS FOR THE

PRAIRIE ISLAND NUCLEAR GENERATING PLANT,

UNITS 1 AND 2,

LICENSE RENEWAL APPLICATION REVIEW

+ + + + +

Red Wing Public Library

225 East Avenue

Red Wing, Minnesota

Wednesday, July 30, 2008

1:30 p.m.

+ + + + +

NRC PARTICIPANTS:

Lance Rakovan, Moderator

Nathan Goodman

Rani Franovich

Richard Plasse

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S

1:30 p.m.

MR. RAKOVAN: If people could please find your seats, we're going to get started.

Good afternoon, everyone. My name is Lance Rakovan. I'm a Communications Specialist with the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, and it's my pleasure to facilitate today's meeting.

The purpose for our meeting today is to discuss the License Renewal and Environmental Scoping Process for the Prairie Island Nuclear Generation Station, Units 1 and 2, License Renewal Application Review, which is basically a long way to say that we're here to talk about Prairie Island license renewal.

I just wanted to take a moment to go over kind of what to expect from this afternoon's meeting and kind of lay down a few ground rules.

Essentially there's two parts of today's meeting. We're going to start out with a couple presentations by NRC staff specifically on the license renewal process and the environmental review process; and then basically we're going to open the meeting up to you.

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 First we'd like to hear if you have any  
2 questions on the material that was presented, and  
3 then we're going to open it up to take comments,  
4 specifically on the environmental scoping process,  
5 and just hopefully hear from you in terms of what we  
6 should be looking for. And, of course, our speakers  
7 will be going into that detail as to what we're  
8 looking for in our presentations.

9 We are transcribing today's meeting,  
10 which is why we're using a microphone in such a small  
11 room. If you are going to ask a question or make a  
12 comment, we are going to ask that you come to the  
13 podium so that you can use the microphone.

14 If you are going to make a comment, we  
15 ask that you identify yourself and if you're with any  
16 group or if you have any affiliations. That way we  
17 can have a true understanding of who made the comment  
18 or asked the question.

19 I'd like to ask to make sure that we  
20 limit the amount of background noise, so the side  
21 conversations, it we could keep those to a minimum;  
22 also, if you could silence your cell phones or turn  
23 them off, that way those won't be going off during  
24 the meeting and disrupting things.

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1                   Basically we're just looking to make sure  
2 that we get a clear, clean transcript of what  
3 transpires today so we can go back and mine the  
4 scoping comments or go back and realize who made a  
5 specific comment if we want to follow up on it.

6                   Hopefully all of you picked up copies of  
7 the slides from today's presentation, along with  
8 public meeting feedback forms. If you didn't,  
9 they're right out on the table; you can raise your  
10 hand once I'm done giving my little spiel here, and I  
11 can go run and get those for you.

12                   We also had a lot of information over in  
13 the other side room, so if you didn't get that  
14 information or you didn't wander over there prior to  
15 the meeting, you can certainly go on over there  
16 afterwards and pick up additional information on  
17 today's topics.

18                   Today's speakers will be Rick Plasse, who  
19 is a project manager for the Prairie Island nuclear  
20 license renewal; we also have Nathan Goodman, who is  
21 the project manager for the environmental aspect of  
22 the license renewal.

23                   I also wanted to point out today we have  
24 with us Karla Stoedter, who is the senior resident

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 inspector at Prairie Island, so she is one of the  
2 Nuclear Regulatory Commission employees who lives  
3 local to this area. So we're happy to have her here  
4 today.

5 So, like I said, we're going to start out  
6 with a few presentations, and then we're going to be  
7 opening up to Q's and A's and then comments.

8 So with that, I will turn things over to  
9 Rick.

10 MR. PLASSE: Thanks, Lance.

11 Good afternoon, my name is Rick Plasse.  
12 I'm a Project Manager with the Division of License  
13 Renewal, and I'm coordinating staff's review of the  
14 Prairie Island Nuclear Generating Units 1 and 2  
15 license renewal application. I'd like to thank all  
16 of you for taking the time to come to the meeting  
17 today.

18 Today we will provide an overview of the  
19 license renewal review process, which includes both a  
20 safety review and an environmental review.

21 There's the first slide.

22 We also will describe in more detail the  
23 environmental review process associated with the  
24 license renewal review.

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 But the most important part of today's  
2 meeting is to receive comments that you may have on  
3 the scope of the environmental review.

4 We also will give you information about  
5 how you can submit comments outside of this meeting  
6 if you so desire.

7 At the conclusion of today's  
8 presentation, we will be happy to answer any  
9 questions that you may have on the license renewal  
10 review process. However, I must ask you to limit  
11 your participation to questions only and hold your  
12 comments until the appropriate time during today's  
13 meeting, as Lance stated.

14 Once all the questions are answered, we  
15 can begin to review any comments that you have on the  
16 scope of our environmental review. I hope the  
17 information we provide will help you to understand  
18 the license renewal review process and the role you  
19 can play in helping us make sure that our  
20 environmental review considers relevant information.

21 Next slide.

22 Before I get into the discussion of the  
23 license renewal process, I'd like to take a minute to  
24 talk about the NRC in terms of what we do and what

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 our mission is.

2 The NRC is a federal agency established  
3 by the Energy Reorganization Act of 1974 that  
4 regulates the civilian use of nuclear material.

5 The Atomic Energy Act of 1954 authorizes  
6 the NRC to grant a 40-year operating license for  
7 nuclear power reactors. This 40-year term was based  
8 primarily on economic considerations and antitrust  
9 factors, not on safety or technical limitations.

10 The Atomic Energy Act also allows for  
11 license renewal.

12 The National Environmental Policy Act of  
13 1969, NEPA, established a national policy for  
14 considering the impact of federal decision-making on  
15 the human environment. As a matter of policy, the  
16 Commission determined reactor license renewal  
17 constitutes a major federal action for which an  
18 environmental impact statement is warranted.

19 The NRC's regulations governing nuclear  
20 safety, security, and environmental protection are  
21 contained in Title 10 of the Code of Federal  
22 Regulations, which is commonly referred to as "10  
23 CFR."

24 In exercising its regulatory authority,

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 the NRC's mission threefold: To ensure adequate  
2 protection of public health and safety; to promote  
3 the common defense and security; and to protect the  
4 environment.

5 The NRC accomplishes its mission through  
6 a combination of regulatory programs and processes  
7 such as establishing rules and regulations,  
8 conducting inspections, issuing enforcement actions,  
9 assessing licensing performance, and evaluating  
10 operating experience from nuclear plants across the  
11 country and internationally.

12 The NRC has resident inspectors at all  
13 operating nuclear power plants, Karla being one of  
14 the two at Prairie Island. These inspectors are  
15 considered the eyes and ears of the NRC. They carry  
16 out our safety mission on a daily basis and are the  
17 front lines of ensuring acceptable safety performance  
18 and compliance with the regulatory requirements.

19 Next slide.

20 Now turning to Prairie Island, for Units  
21 1 and 2 the current 40-year operating licenses expire  
22 on August 9th, 2013, and October 29th, 2014,  
23 respectively. NRC received Nuclear Management  
24 Company's application for license renewal of both

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 units on April 15th, 2008.

2 The next slide.

3 Contents of an application:

4 A license renewal application is required  
5 to contain general information such as the  
6 applicant's name, address, business, and  
7 administrative information;

8 Technical information pertaining to aging  
9 management, which that information is the focus of  
10 the staff's safety review;

11 Technical specifications defining  
12 operating parameters of the plant -- the application  
13 indicates what, if any, changes or additions to the  
14 technical specifications are necessary to manage the  
15 effects aging during the period of extended  
16 operation;

17 And, finally, the application also  
18 includes an environmental report, which is the  
19 applicant's assessment of the environmental impacts  
20 of continued operation.

21 This information serves as a starting  
22 point for the staff's environmental review.

23 Next slide.

24 License renewal involves two parallel

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 reviews, the safety review and the environmental  
2 review. These two reviews evaluate separate aspects  
3 of the license renewal application.

4 The safety review focuses on the aging of  
5 components and structures that the NRC deems  
6 important to plant safety. The staff's main  
7 objective in this review is to determine if the  
8 effects of aging will be adequately managed by the  
9 applicant.

10 The results of the safety review are  
11 documented in a Safety Evaluation Report, which we  
12 commonly refer to as the "SER."

13 For the environmental review the staff  
14 considers, evaluates, and discloses the environmental  
15 impacts of continued plant operation for an  
16 additional 20 years.

17 The staff also evaluates the  
18 environmental impacts of alternatives to license  
19 renewal.

20 The objective of the review is to  
21 determine if the environmental impacts of license  
22 renewal are so great that license renewal would not  
23 be a reasonable option; or the staff prepares an  
24 environmental impact statement, or EIS, to document

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 it's environmental review.

2 Next slide.

3 I'd like to go back to some of the  
4 ongoing regulatory oversight activities. I'd like to  
5 mention a few very important areas of NRC oversight  
6 that routinely come up with our interactions with  
7 members of the public.

8 NRC staff addresses these areas of  
9 performance every day as part of the ongoing  
10 regulatory oversight provided for all currently-  
11 operating power reactors. They include emergency  
12 planning, security, current safety performance as  
13 defined by NRC inspection findings, violations, and  
14 general assessment of plant performance.

15 For specific information on the current  
16 performance of the Prairie Island Units 1 and 2, you  
17 can use the links on the bottom for the two units,  
18 which provides the details of the current assessment.  
19 The links are also in your handout for the slides.

20 The NRC monitors and provides regulatory  
21 oversight of activities in these areas on an ongoing  
22 basis under the current operating license; thus we do  
23 not reevaluate them in license renewal. That's not  
24 to say that they are not important; we just do not

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 duplicate the other regulatory processes in these  
2 areas for the license renewal review.

3 Next slide.

4 This diagram illustrates the safety and  
5 environmental review processes. It also features two  
6 other considerations in the Commission's decision of  
7 whether or not to renew an operating license.

8 One of these considerations is the  
9 independent review performed by the Advisory  
10 Committee on Reactor Safeguards. Statutorily  
11 mandated by the Atomic Energy Act in 1954, the ACRS  
12 is a group of scientists and nuclear experts who  
13 serve as a consulting body to the Commission.

14 The ACRS reviews the license renewal  
15 application and the NRC staff safety evaluation, the  
16 SER. The ACRS reports their findings and  
17 recommendations directly to the Commission.

18 Hearings may also be conducted.  
19 Interested stakeholders may submit concerns or  
20 contentions and request a hearing.

21 If a hearing is granted, the Commission  
22 considers the outcome of the hearing process in its  
23 decision of whether or not to issue a renewed operate  
24 operating license.

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 Now I'm going to describe the license  
2 renewal review process in a little more detail,  
3 starting again with the safety review.

4 Next slide.

5 The regulations governing licensing  
6 renewal are based on two guiding principles. To  
7 effectively communicate these principles, I need to  
8 describe a concept used by the NRC. That concept is  
9 licensing basis.

10 Licensing basis consists of a wide range  
11 of design and operational requirements and conditions  
12 that must be met for the plant to comply with its  
13 operating license. It serves as a basis upon which  
14 the NRC originally licensed the plant; and to  
15 continue to operate, a plant must conform with its  
16 licensing basis.

17 As I mentioned, the regulations governing  
18 license renewal are based on two guiding principles  
19 that relate back to the licensing basis.

20 The first principle is that the current  
21 regulatory process is adequate to ensure that the  
22 licensing basis of all operating plants provides and  
23 maintains an acceptable level of safety.

24 The second principle is that the current

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 plant's specific licensing basis must be maintained  
2 during the renewal term in the same manner and to the  
3 same extent as during the original license term. In  
4 other words, the same rules that apply under the  
5 current license will apply in the renewal term.

6 In addition, a renewed license will  
7 include conditions that must be met to ensure aging  
8 of structures and components important to safety are  
9 adequately managed so that the plant's current  
10 licensing basis is maintained during a period of  
11 extended operation.

12 Next slide.

13 The safety review is rigorous. The staff  
14 reviews the applicant's license renewal application  
15 and supporting documentation. This review includes  
16 an evaluation of new and existing programs and  
17 surveillance activities to determine with reasonable  
18 assurance that the effects of aging for certain plant  
19 structures and components would be adequately managed  
20 or monitored.

21 The safety review also includes site  
22 audits to verify the technical basis of the license  
23 renewal application and to confirm that the  
24 applicant's aging management programs and activities

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 conform with how they are described in the  
2 application.

3 The staff documents the bases and  
4 conclusions of its review in a safety evaluation, our  
5 SER, which is publicly available.

6 In addition, a team of specialized  
7 inspectors travel to the reactor site to verify that  
8 aging management programs are being implemented,  
9 modified, or planned consistent with the license  
10 renewal application.

11 Finally, as I previously mentioned, the  
12 Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards performs an  
13 independent review of the license renewal application  
14 and the staff's SER and makes a recommendation to the  
15 Commission regarding the proposed action to issue a  
16 renewed operating license.

17 Next slide.

18 Now turning to the environmental review  
19 for license renewal, this review is performed in  
20 accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act  
21 of 1969, or NEPA.

22 NEPA provides the basic architecture for  
23 federal environmental review requirements. It  
24 requires that all federal agencies follow a

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 systematic approach in evaluating potential impacts  
2 associated with major federal actions and  
3 alternatives to those actions. By law, the NEPA  
4 process involves public participation and public  
5 disclosure.

6 The National Environmental Policy Act  
7 also established the U.S. Council on Environmental  
8 Quality, CEQ, within the Executive Office of the  
9 President, and CEQ establishes policy for  
10 implementation of NEPA.

11 The NRC's environmental regulations  
12 contained in 10 CFR, Part 51, are largely based on  
13 those that CEQ developed.

14 Our environmental reviews consider the  
15 impact of the license renewal and any mitigation for  
16 those impacts we consider to be significant.

17 We also consider the impacts of  
18 alternatives to the license renewal, including the  
19 impacts of not issuing a renewed license.

20 The staff documents its environmental  
21 review in an environmental impact statement.

22 Next slide.

23 For a license renewal review, the NRC  
24 looks at a wide range of environmental impacts. In

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 conducting our environmental review, we consult with  
2 various federal, state, and local officials as well  
3 as leaders of Indian nations and gather pertinent  
4 information from these sources to ensure it is  
5 considered in our analysis. Examples include the  
6 Fish and Wildlife Service, the Environmental  
7 Protection Agency, State Bureau of Radiation  
8 Protection, State Department of Natural Resources.

9 In the Prairie Island case, the NRC has  
10 signed a Memorandum of Understanding, or what we call  
11 an "MOU," with the Prairie Island Indian Community  
12 establishing an official cooperating agency  
13 relationship for purposes of the environmental  
14 review.

15 The MOU provides a framework for  
16 cooperation and coordination between the NRC and the  
17 Prairie Island Indian Community in recognition of the  
18 community's special expertise in the areas of land  
19 use, socioeconomics, environmental justice, and  
20 historical and archeological resources.

21 Now, with that I'd like to introduce  
22 Nathan Goodman, other PM, who will complete today's  
23 presentation on the environmental review.

24 MR. GOODMAN: Thank you, Rick.

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1           As Rick said, my name is Nathan Goodman,  
2           and I'm the Project Manager leading the staff's  
3           environmental review for Prairie Island Units 1 and 2  
4           license renewal. As Rick said, I will provide more  
5           information on our environmental review process.

6           The environmental review begins with a  
7           scoping process. The purpose of the scoping process  
8           is to identify significant issues that should be  
9           considered in the environmental review.

10          We are now gathering information that we  
11          will use to prepare an environmental impact  
12          statement. As part of that process, we are here to  
13          collect your comments on the scope of the  
14          environmental review -- that is, the environmental  
15          impacts that the staff should consider.

16          The staff has developed a generic  
17          environmental impact statement, or generic EIS, that  
18          addresses a number of issues common to all nuclear  
19          power plants.

20          The staff is supplementing that generic  
21          EIS with a site-specific EIS in which we will address  
22          issues that are specific to Prairie Island.

23          The staff also reexamines the conclusions  
24          reached in the generic EIS to determine if there is

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 any new and significant information that would change  
2 those conclusions.

3 Next slide.

4 The scoping process started on July 22nd,  
5 2008, when the Notice of Intent to Prepare an EIS and  
6 Conduct Scoping was published. The NRC will be  
7 accepting comments on the scope of the environmental  
8 review until September 22nd, 2008.

9 As some of you may have seen, we've had  
10 fliers posted for the last several weeks that say  
11 scoping goes until September 9th. We've extended the  
12 scoping review to allow comments until September  
13 22nd.

14 In general, we are looking for  
15 information about the environmental impacts from  
16 continued operation of Prairie Island. You can  
17 assist us in that process by telling us, for example,  
18 what aspects of your community we should focus on,  
19 what local, environmental, social, and economic  
20 issues the NRC should examine during our  
21 environmental review, and what reasonable  
22 alternatives are most appropriate for this region.

23 These are just some examples of the input  
24 we're looking for, and they represent the kind of

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 information we are seeking through the environmental  
2 scoping process. Your comments today should be  
3 helpful in providing insights of this nature.

4 Next slide.

5 This slide illustrates the things the  
6 Commission considers in deciding if a renewed  
7 operation license will be issued.

8 So how do we use your input?

9 Public comments are an important part of  
10 the environmental review process. We consider all  
11 the comments that we receive from the public during  
12 the scoping process.

13 Now, in addition to providing comments at  
14 this meeting, there are other ways that you can  
15 submit comments for our environmental review process.

16 You can provide written comments by mail  
17 to the chief of our Rules and Directors Branch at the  
18 addresses provided on the slide, which are also in  
19 your handouts, or email at the addresses provided in  
20 the slide and on your handouts.

21 You can also make comments in person if  
22 you happen to really enjoy traveling to Rockville,  
23 Maryland. And if you do, please contact Rick or  
24 myself in advance to make arrangements.

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 As I mentioned before, comments should be  
2 submitted by September 22nd.

3 Next slide.

4 This slide shows important milestone  
5 dates for the environmental review process. The  
6 opportunity to submit contentions and request a  
7 hearing -- and request for a hearing closes on August  
8 13th, 2008.

9 And if you have comments you would like  
10 to submit outside of today's meeting, again, you have  
11 until September 22nd.

12 Please note that a Draft Supplemental  
13 Environmental Impact Statement will be issued for  
14 public comment in March of 2009.

15 While the slide lists the milestones for  
16 the environmental review and opportunities for public  
17 involvement, the safety review will also be performed  
18 in accordance with its own review schedule.

19 This slide identifies me, Nathan Goodman,  
20 as the primary point of contact within the NRC for  
21 environmental issues and Rick, Project Manager,  
22 spearheading the staff's safety review.

23 It also identifies what documents related  
24 to our review may be found in the local area. The

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 Red Wing Public Library has agreed to make the  
2 license renewal application available for public  
3 review.

4 When it is published for comment, the  
5 Draft Environmental Impact Statement will also be  
6 available at this library.

7 In addition, these documents will also be  
8 on the NRC's website at the web address shown at the  
9 bottom of this page.

10 As you came in, you were asked to fill  
11 out a registration card at our reception table. If  
12 you've included your address on that card, we will  
13 mail a copy of the draft and final EIS to you.

14 This concludes my presentation. I'll  
15 turn it back over to Lance. Thank you.

16 MR. RAKOVAN: Thank you, gentlemen.

17 Before we move on to the specific people  
18 who we've had sign up to speak and give comments, we  
19 wanted to open up the floor to see if there were any  
20 clarifying questions on the presentations that were  
21 given.

22 So just if you had a question that you  
23 wanted to ask in terms of some of the material that  
24 was covered, just, you know, raise your hand.

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1                   Again, unfortunately, I'm going to have  
2 to ask you to come up to the podium to ask your  
3 question just so we can make sure that we get your  
4 question on the transcript.

5                   But does anybody have a question on any  
6 of the materials that were presented?

7                   (No response.)

8                   Again, if you don't want to do it in a  
9 public format, all the NRC people who are here for  
10 the meeting will be milling around after the meeting;  
11 so if you have a question that you wanted or a  
12 discussion that you want to have kind of more in  
13 private or one on one, you can certainly do that.  
14 Just grab someone after the meeting, and that would  
15 be fine.

16                   Okay. I'm going to go to the yellow  
17 cards that I had. If you wanted to speak or to make  
18 a comment, we asked when you signed in to fill out a  
19 yellow card. You're certainly not restricted to  
20 talking only by signing one of these.

21                   What I'm going to do is I'm going to go  
22 through the ones that I have in the order that we  
23 received them, and, again, open it up. So if you  
24 have a comment that you'd like to make at that point,

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 we're certainly not going to say you can't just  
2 because you didn't fill out a yellow card, but we're  
3 going to start with the yellow cards that we have.

4 The first card that I have is Andi  
5 Vukmir. From there we'll be going to Michael Schultz,  
6 and then, third, Ron Johnson.

7 So Andy?

8 ANDRIJA VUKMIR: Good afternoon, the NRC,  
9 Xcel, and also public concerned.

10 I've lived here in Red Wing for the past  
11 25 years. I'm a strong advocate in support of the  
12 nuclear energy.

13 At this time I urge you, the NRC, and  
14 support from the public to support both a license  
15 renewal process for existing nuclear plants as well  
16 as to work putting policies in place to support  
17 building of new power plants in the future.

18 Nuclear energy keeps American business  
19 competitive, and the plants themselves are incredible  
20 job resources for the Red Wing and the neighboring  
21 communities.

22 As a nation, the U.S. Department of  
23 Energy projects that the U.S. electrical demand will  
24 rise about 25 percent by the year 2030. This means

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 that our nation will need hundreds of new power  
2 plants to provide electricity for homes and continued  
3 economic growth here in Red Wing and the neighboring  
4 communities, and of course Goodhue County is included  
5 there, in all.

6 Nuclear power plants are the lowest-cost  
7 producers of electricity by providing a reliable and  
8 affordable source of electricity, and nuclear energy  
9 helps to keep American businesses competitive.

10 Nuclear plants are sources of local job  
11 growth here in Red Wing.

12 And nuclear power plants, which do not  
13 emit any carbon dioxide, account for the majority of  
14 voluntary reduction in greenhouse gas emissions in  
15 the electrical power sector, according to a 2007  
16 report from Power Partners, a partnership between the  
17 electric power industry and the U.S. Department of  
18 Energy.

19 The nation's nuclear power plants are  
20 among the safest, secure individual facilities in the  
21 United States. Multiple layers of physical security  
22 together with high levels of operating performance  
23 protect plant workers, the public, and the  
24 environment.

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1           The recent Bird Island Nuclear Plant  
2 emergency drill conducted last week was a successful  
3 exercise and part of the support team.

4           The primary concern of Xcel is the health  
5 and safety of the public. The spent fuel is not a  
6 threat to the public. Under an integrated management  
7 approach, spent fuel remains safely stored in the  
8 nuclear power plants until being moved to consolidate  
9 in long-term storage facilities.

10           Eventually the United States will follow  
11 France, Japan, England, and other places and will  
12 recycle the spent fuel to extract the energy there  
13 and place the remaining usable end product at a  
14 repository at Yucca Mountain, Nevada.

15           And in closing, I am thankful for the  
16 opportunity of having clean nuclear power to produce  
17 electricity. I urge the NRC and the public, working  
18 together as a team with Xcel, to support the license  
19 renewal process for Prairie Island's Units 1 and 2  
20 and to put policies in place to promote building new  
21 power plants in order to meet the projected  
22 electrical demands.

23           MR. RAKOVAN: Thank you, sir.

24           Michael Schultz from the city of Red

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 Wing.

2 MICHAEL SCHULTZ: My name is Michael  
3 Schultz. I'm a member of the Red Wing City Council.

4 This past week we passed a resolution  
5 supporting Prairie Island Nuclear Generating Plant  
6 license renewal, and we would like to read into the  
7 record our resolution.

8 "Whereas, the Prairie Island Nuclear  
9 Generating Plant became operational with the start-up  
10 of Unit 1 reactor in December 1973 and Unit 2 reactor  
11 in December 1974; and

12 "Whereas, Prairie Island has operated  
13 safely and efficiently for more than 30 years,  
14 generated a record 8.89 million megawatt hours of  
15 electricity in 2007, and its 100 megawatts of  
16 electrical generating capacity remain vital to  
17 Minnesota's economy; and

18 "Whereas Xcel Energy has continually  
19 reinvested in the Prairie Island facility to assure  
20 the continued safe, clean, reliable and affordable  
21 production of electricity for Minnesota's homes,  
22 businesses, and factories; and

23 "Whereas, the 700 permanent jobs at  
24 Prairie Island and the extensive use of contractors

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 for ongoing maintenance and special projects are  
2 recognized as vitally important to the economies of  
3 the City of Red Wing and Goodhue County; and

4 "Whereas, Xcel Energy announced in the  
5 fall of 2004 that it intended to renew the license of  
6 both units at Prairie Island for an additional 20  
7 years; and

8 "Whereas, Xcel Energy submitted an  
9 application to renew Prairie Island's operating  
10 licenses for its two units to the United States  
11 Nuclear Regulatory Commission on April 15, 2008; and

12 "Whereas, Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
13 is the Federal agency charged with oversight of our  
14 nation's nuclear facilities and encourages public  
15 input and comment on license renewal proceedings; and

16 "Whereas, the Prairie Island Nuclear  
17 Generating Plant has been a good neighbor to the  
18 communities located in Goodhue County and Pierce  
19 County for more than three decades;

20 "Now, therefore, be it resolved that the  
21 City of Red Wing City Council supports the renewal of  
22 the licenses for the nuclear generating facilities at  
23 Prairie Island to assure their continued operation of  
24 safe, affordable and integrally important component

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 of Minnesota's electric power supply system for  
2 another 20 years; and

3 "Be it further resolved that the City of  
4 Red Wing will present a copy of this resolution to  
5 the Nuclear Regulatory Commission."

6 Thank you.

7 MR. RAKOVAN: Thank you, sir.

8 Next we'll go to Ron Johnson, followed by  
9 Katie Himanga and Scott Arneson.

10 RON JOHNSON: Good afternoon. My name is  
11 Ron Johnson. I'm president of the Prairie Island  
12 Tribal Council and the Prairie Island Indian  
13 Community.

14 I've represented my community for several  
15 years, and as president I have the obligation to  
16 ensure the health and welfare of the community, which  
17 includes also the environment down there.

18 I'm here today as the continuing  
19 operation of the Prairie Island Nuclear Generating  
20 Plant is one of our most important issues for our  
21 community. In fact, most community members have had  
22 concerns about the plant since it went online in  
23 1973.

24 The Prairie Island Indian Community is a

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 federally-recognized Indian tribe, and as such we  
2 expect to work with the federal agencies, including  
3 the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, on a government-  
4 to-government basis, and we are pleased that the NRC  
5 has approved our request for a cooperating agency for  
6 purposes of preparing parts of the -- for the  
7 environmental impact statement for the license  
8 renewal.

9 We look forward to working with the NRC  
10 over the next two years on this important issue. We  
11 will be submitting extensive written comments to the  
12 NRC relative to environmental and safety concerns.

13 And I thank you for this opportunity to  
14 speak in front of you today. Thank you.

15 MR. RAKOVAN: Thank you, sir.

16 Next will go to Katie Himanga.

17 KATIE HIMANGA: Good afternoon. My name  
18 is Katie Himanga. I'm the mayor of the City of Lake  
19 City. We're located about 15 miles down river.

20 Thank you for the opportunity to say a  
21 few words. The community of Lake City is impacted by  
22 the Prairie Island Nuclear Plant, just as other  
23 communities in the area are.

24 The Lake City Utility Board had an

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 opportunity to talk about the license renewal at its  
2 last meeting, and my City Council spoke about it very  
3 briefly this past Monday evening.

4 And I bring to you the top two concerns,  
5 environmental concerns related to operation of the  
6 nuclear plant and ask that they be considered in  
7 plans for mitigation through this process.

8 First and foremost the item of concern  
9 for us is the long-term storage of nuclear waste.

10 The second concern for us is the thermal  
11 impacts of the discharge of water, warm water into  
12 the Mississippi River, and we ask that it be  
13 considered, both the impacts on the Mississippi River  
14 and on the Lake Pepin ecosystem, and also its  
15 cultural impacts such as how it might affect ice, for  
16 example.

17 And we would ask that the best available  
18 modeling be used to determine what those impacts are  
19 and plans made for mitigation.

20 Thank you.

21 MR. RAKOVAN: Thank you.

22 Next we'll go to Scott Arneson.

23 SCOTT ARNESON: Thank you.

24 I'm Scott Arneson, Goodhue County

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 Administrator. With me is Steve Betcher, Goodhue  
2 County Attorney.

3 I just wanted to say a few things for the  
4 record today, that Goodhue County is very pleased  
5 with the economic impact that Xcel Energy has on the  
6 City of Red Wing and Goodhue County and the entire  
7 area. We've appreciated the relationship that we  
8 have with Xcel.

9 Just in the past couple of years we've  
10 worked through a rate stabilization agreement with  
11 them, and we have a great relationship with them.

12 On August 11th they will be coming to the  
13 County Board and having a committee of the whole on  
14 the renewal application, after which point the County  
15 Board will be considering a resolution supporting the  
16 relicensure.

17 STEVE BETCHER: And as Goodhue County  
18 Attorney, I'd just like to put on the record that  
19 we've had a multi-faceted relationship with Xcel  
20 Energy over the years; and from the time the nuclear  
21 plants opened, that we work closely with them on  
22 security issues, we work closely with them on  
23 continuing economic support in the tax base of this  
24 community, and we believe it's been a very successful

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 collaboration up to this point, and we believe that  
2 the necessity of energy to our community has  
3 certainly been recognized by the plants that we've  
4 had here up to this time.

5 And I believe the County Board will be  
6 considering the full impact of the relationship and  
7 offering their opinions on the future and also their  
8 opinions on any concerns that may be identified, and  
9 we will be reporting back to them on the comments  
10 that we're hearing here today as well.

11 Thank you.

12 MR. RAKOVAN: Thank you, gentlemen.

13 The last person that I have in terms of  
14 filling out the yellow cards is Mike Wadley from Xcel  
15 Energy.

16 MIKE WADLEY: Thank you.

17 Good afternoon. My name's Mike Wadley.  
18 I'm the site vice president for the Prairie Island  
19 Nuclear Generating Plant, and I'm here today to  
20 provide Xcel Energy's support and perspective of our  
21 request for renewal of the operating license for  
22 Prairie Island Units 1 and 2.

23 The mission of everyone that works at  
24 Prairie Island is clear: It's safe, clean, reliable,

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 and affordable operation with the health and safety  
2 of the public and our employees being number one  
3 priority.

4 Two of our key values include being a  
5 good neighbor and a steward of the environment in  
6 which we operate.

7 Our 700 employees are highly experienced,  
8 well-trained, committed to the safe and continuing  
9 operation of Prairie Island. All of our employees go  
10 through a rigorous training to continuously hone  
11 their skills and learn new procedures and  
12 information.

13 We continuously improve our training  
14 based on advances in technology, best practices  
15 learned through benchmarking of the industry and  
16 feedback from our employees as they identify better  
17 ways to gain the skills and knowledge that are needed  
18 to operate the plant safely.

19 An example of this high-quality training  
20 is our control room simulator that is used to train  
21 and update our operators and staff members.

22 The NRC, Nuclear Regulatory Commission,  
23 requires that employees undergo extensive  
24 qualification programs utilizing this simulator to

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 receive a Nuclear Regulatory Commission operator  
2 license, which qualifies an employee to work in the  
3 plant's control room.

4 Once an operator receives their initial  
5 license, they are required to spend five to six weeks  
6 each year maintaining that qualification.

7 We also have extensive processes and  
8 detailed procedures that are continuously reviewed  
9 and modified to cover every aspect of our operation.  
10 We have an exhaustive set of procedures that cover  
11 operation, maintenance, engineering, training,  
12 security, and emergency response.

13 Our emergency response procedures and  
14 drills, for example, examine just how well our  
15 employees react to an event of an emergency. The  
16 emergency plan focuses on health and safety, health  
17 and safety of the public, health and safety of our  
18 employees, and safety of the plant.

19 Emergency response drills are conducted  
20 several times a year to test our abilities and to  
21 carefully analyze areas in which we can improve.

22 The rigorous standards we abide by are  
23 set and reviewed through both the Nuclear Regulatory  
24 Commission and the Federal Emergency Management

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 Agency.

2 We have a collaborative approach to  
3 emergency planning at Prairie Island which results in  
4 a team effort between employees, Goodhue and Dakota  
5 Counties of Minnesota, Pierce County in Wisconsin,  
6 and the states of Minnesota and Wisconsin, the  
7 Nuclear Regulatory Commission, and other federal  
8 agencies.

9 All told, more than 2,000 people are part  
10 of the emergency response teams throughout these  
11 organizations.

12 We have consistently demonstrated our  
13 ability to protect the health and safety of the  
14 public and our employees. We will continue to do so  
15 as we partner with the NRC to maintain the highest  
16 standards of safety excellence.

17 The Prairie Island plant has been well  
18 maintained over its lifetime. Approximately every 18  
19 months we perform refueling outages on each unit.  
20 During these outages, the plant staff, with the help  
21 of hundreds of contractors, complete more than 1300  
22 maintenance activities and replace one-third of the  
23 plant's reactor core fuel, this in addition to  
24 ongoing maintenance, inspection, and regular testing

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 activities that are performed during the period in  
2 which the plant is operating at full power.

3 Over the years we've continued to make  
4 capital improvements to a wide range of equipment to  
5 take advantage of technology and improve materials to  
6 ensure safe and reliable operation.

7 For example, Unit 1's steam generators  
8 were replaced in the fall of 2004, and both reactor  
9 vessel heads were replaced as well.

10 As computer training methods evolve,  
11 we're able to broaden the range of training to our  
12 work force. As we move forward, we continue to  
13 upgrade and improve equipment and technology at the  
14 Prairie Island Nuclear Generating Plant.

15 Since the plant began operating Unit 1 in  
16 1973 and Unit 2 in 1974, there have been many changes  
17 showing the nuclear industry's dedication and  
18 commitment to an improved record of safety and  
19 security.

20 I would add that the regulations set  
21 forth by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission that we  
22 abide by and which we're held accountable to are the  
23 most stringent of any industry, and the inspections  
24 are more rigorous to maintain this record of safe and

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 reliable operation.

2 One example is security at all U.S.  
3 nuclear plants. Security at nuclear plants across  
4 the nation has received increased emphasis and  
5 scrutiny since the tragic events of September 11th,  
6 2001.

7 Security at Prairie Island is no  
8 exception, and we have taken extensive precautions  
9 and implemented new policies and procedures to ensure  
10 the safety and well being of the community and our  
11 employees is maintained. This includes several  
12 million dollars in additional resources and new  
13 equipment.

14 We continue to work with the Nuclear  
15 Regulatory Commission to review and evaluate our  
16 security procedures to make certain that the most  
17 effective methods are being utilized.

18 Prairie Island is a strong supporter of  
19 the environment. We take great care in our daily  
20 activities to ensure that the environment is well  
21 protected.

22 Our employees feel fortunate that the  
23 location of the Prairie Island plant rests on the  
24 banks of the Mississippi River. The site is home to

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 numerous wildlife, aquatic species, and plant life.  
2 Our efforts have made Prairie Island a safe and sound  
3 habitat for many years and will continue in the  
4 future.

5 On a different note, Prairie Island is  
6 more than a power plant operated by highly-skilled  
7 workers; it is part of the community. Not only does  
8 the plant rely upon local companies for goods and  
9 services, but our employees live in and contribute to  
10 the surrounding communities.

11 We are very proud of our participation  
12 and our willingness to give back to the community in  
13 a variety of ways, including serving on city and town  
14 boards, leaders in civic and community organizations,  
15 as sports coaches, on church committees, boards, and  
16 councils as well as members of charitable  
17 organizations.

18 Our employees also raise money for local  
19 United Way campaigns, American Cancer Society as well  
20 as Make-A-Wish of Minnesota, to name a few.

21 In conclusion, the Prairie Island plant  
22 has been a productive contributor to the energy needs  
23 in Minnesota and a valuable asset and good neighbor  
24 to the surrounding communities. We remain committed

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 to operating safely, reliably, economically and  
2 focused on being a good neighbor and a steward to the  
3 environment.

4 I and the employees of Prairie Island  
5 look forward to serving you and meeting the needs of  
6 the community for many years to come.

7 Thank you.

8 MR. RAKOVAN: At this point that is all  
9 the yellow cards that I had filled out for people who  
10 knew that they wanted to make a comment when they  
11 first came into the meeting.

12 At this point I just want to make sure  
13 that there's nobody else who wanted to come give  
14 comments or if anybody else has a question that they  
15 would like to ask in a public forum.

16 (No response.)

17 Okay. Just keep in mind pretty much  
18 anybody with one of these name tags on is probably an  
19 NRC employee. We're all going to be hanging around  
20 after the meeting, so if you have a question or a  
21 topic that you'd like to address with them, grab one  
22 of them; and if they're not the right person to have  
23 that conversation, they can hopefully find the person  
24 who is the right person.

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1           Also, there's going to be another meeting  
2 here tonight, so just in case you'd like to hear the  
3 presentations again or if you'd like to see who else  
4 might come and what kind of comments they might give.

5           Let me just make sure I have the time  
6 right.

7           That will start at 7:00, and it will be  
8 here. Information session will start at 6:00, and  
9 we'll have it in the room across the way, same thing  
10 as we did prior to this meeting.

11           Rani, did you want to close the meeting?

12           Okay. Rani, if you could introduce  
13 yourself, please.

14           RANI FRANOVICH: Hi. I'm Rani Franovich.  
15 I'm the chief of the branch responsible for  
16 conducting the license renewal review for Prairie  
17 Island at NRC headquarters, and I just want to take a  
18 few minutes to thank you all for coming.

19           This is a really important part of our  
20 environmental review process. It's an opportunity  
21 for us to come out and meet with members of the  
22 community and get your input into things that you  
23 think are important for us to look at. And  
24 everyone's busy, so we really appreciate your time

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1 that you took today to join us.

2 I also wanted to reiterate a couple of  
3 important dates coming up.

4 The hearing opportunity closes, again,  
5 August 13th, so if there is any interest in  
6 proffering contentions to the Commission and  
7 requesting a hearing, as long as we get those before  
8 August 13th we'll be able to consider those.

9 And also the scoping comments are due a  
10 little later than we originally had planned.  
11 September 22nd is the due date.

12 I wanted to make one other comment:  
13 We've heard a few comments from the public today  
14 about NRC establishing policy to construct new  
15 plants, and I just wanted to kind of reiterate the  
16 NRC's role and responsibility to the public.

17 We really don't make policy decisions  
18 about meeting energy needs for the future. The NRC's  
19 role is to make sure that if nuclear generation is  
20 provided in the future, it's done safely, safe to  
21 human health and safe to the environment.

22 So I just wanted to put that out there  
23 for folks to make sure it's understood what our role  
24 is in nuclear power.

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1           One other thing: We have public meeting  
2 feedback forms. I think Lance may have mentioned  
3 this at the start of the meeting. They look like  
4 this (indicating). They're provided at the table  
5 where we have registration set up right outside here.

6           If there's anything we can do to make our  
7 public meetings better, things we're doing well that  
8 you liked, things that we can do different, we'd love  
9 to hear from you.

10          So please take a few minutes to fill out  
11 one of these forms. You can leave it on the table;  
12 postage is pre-paid, so you can take it home, think  
13 about it and put some comments down and mail it to us  
14 if you would like.

15          And with that, thank you again for  
16 coming.

17          (Whereupon, at 2:17 p.m. the proceedings  
18 were adjourned.)

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9

**NEAL R. GROSS**

COURT REPORTERS AND TRANSCRIBERS

1323 RHODE ISLAND AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005-3701